

Washington State Rehabilitation Council Building Inroads to Employment and Success

Dedication:

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council dedicates this 2005 Annual Report to all former, current or future customers of Washington Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the people who help them make their dreams come true.

Ed Roberts:

“I’ve always been a dreamer. It really helped me to dream about what someday I might be. I went in to the California Department of Rehabilitation which was supposed to be there to help people with disabilities to get trained and find jobs and within about twelve minutes a counselor, who also had a disability, said, “Why should you even apply? They’re going to reject you. We’re going to reject you.”

They did all of the testing and within two weeks I got a rejection notice. I had a dream the night I got the notice, that someday I’d be director of that department.

Fourteen years later, California Governor Jerry Brown appointed me director of that agency. Dreams do come true.”

Some of Ed Robert’s major accomplishments:

- Director of California Department of Rehabilitation 1975 to 1983
- Father of the US Independent Living Movement
- Founder of the Berkeley Center for Independent Living (The first of 404 Centers of its kind in the world)

- Founder of the World Institute on Disability
- 1984 MacArthur Genius Award Recipient

Source: MOUTH Magazine, Ed Roberts **On Sex, Karate, and Disability**, 2004

Duane French
Washington State Rehabilitation Council Chair:

November 20, 2005

“Dear RSA Commissioner Anthony and Governor Christine Gregoire:

Please accept the 2005 Washington State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report.

Members of the Washington State Rehabilitation Council represent the perfect blend of people from business, labor, government, private providers and, most importantly, people with disabilities. The council has proven very effective in making excellent recommendations to improve vocational rehabilitation services in Washington State.

Statistical evidence documenting the performance of vocational rehabilitation agencies across the nation shows that Washington State has a lot of work to do to improve its performance in moving people with disabilities successfully into the workforce.

The State Rehabilitation Council is committed to do the hard work necessary to increase the likelihood for success in the employment of people with disabilities. The council applauds you, Governor Gregoire, for your commitment to hire people with disabilities.”

Respectfully,
Duane M. French, Chair

Lynnae Ruttledge
Director, DVR:

“As DVR Director, I value the role of the State Rehabilitation Council and its important relationship with DVR. The SRC represents an important voice. The Council’s ability to critically and constructively advise DVR on the performance of our responsibilities is important to our success. As partners, I look forward to a collaborative approach in developing our State goals and priorities as well as evaluating the effectiveness of our program.

My perspective of the challenges and opportunities facing the public vocational rehabilitation program has been gained from a unique blend of experiences including those as a former consumer of vocational rehabilitation services, an advocate as the Executive Director of a Center for Independent Living in Michigan, a policy partner as a Governor’s appointee to the State Rehabilitation Council and a former member of the executive leadership team of the Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services program.

I am honored to be here in Washington and look forward to working with the members of the State Rehabilitation Council as we address the challenges and opportunities ahead. Meaningful employment is important and it helps to shape our self-esteem and often defines our ability to contribute meaningfully to our community. Promoting high expectations and being able to impact attitudes is what motivates me every day and defines the work ahead for us.

As I look to the future, my goal is to set our sights high. These are exciting times to be a part of Washington DVR. I look forward to working with the Council.” -Lynnae Ruttledge, DVR Director

Joelle Brouner
Washington State Rehabilitation Council
Executive Director:

November 20, 2005

“Dear Commissioner Anthony and Governor Gregoire,

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council is a success story and an example of how much a group can accomplish. The Council has dedicated itself to building a solid foundation, strong relationships and achieving its mandates under the Rehabilitation Act. It is with great pleasure that we share our 2005 Annual Report with you.

The motivation and integrity of our volunteer council members has made my job easy. Our focus on connecting with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s (DVR) customers and understanding the root causes of the Division’s notable challenges has assisted us in defining and undertaking our work with determination. We have appreciated DVR’s commitment to a constructive partnership with the Council. At a time when government at every level is evaluating the success of its programs with performance based measures, we appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with our partners at DVR to illustrate the difference this program makes in the lives of people with disabilities and the community at large.

During 2005, the Washington State Rehabilitation Council undertook the process of rebuilding, educating new council members and engaging with the customers receiving DVR services. We listened to young people making the transition from high school to adulthood, we learned how the Department of Social and Health Services Mental Health Division and DVR work with one another and listened to the customers of both systems to

learn how they could better succeed in securing and maintaining employment. The Council demonstrated leadership in drawing the community together to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. These are just a few of the Council's achievements this year.

As we embarked on a new chapter in the life of this Council we learned to work together as a group. We came to appreciate the many gifts in our community and the skills of each council member. It has been a pleasure and an honor to represent the promise of Vocational Rehabilitation to the people of Washington State.”

Sincerely,

Joelle Brouner, Executive Director
Washington State Rehabilitation Council

PURPOSE:

The WSRC envisions a DVR that provides the highest quality services and exceeds expectations of individuals with disabilities.

SRC Administration Membership:

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council was reconstituted in October of 2004 by Governor Gary Locke.

Governor Locke brought together an exciting blend of leaders in business, government, social services, advocacy, and disability rights. The council has members from all of the following mandated categories:

Voting Members

- Statewide Independent Living Council
- Parent training and information center
- Client Assistance Program
- Community rehabilitation program
- Business, industry, and labor
- Section 121 Tribal VR Director
- Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Washington Workforce Investment Board
- Disability advocacy groups

Ex officio Members

- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- DVR Director

The Council is awaiting an appointment decision from Governor Gregoire on the currently vacant position reserved for the Client Assistance Program.

Duane French – Chair

“I believe that vocational rehabilitation can transform the life of a person with a disability because I have experienced it in my own life. I have worked as a state director of vocational rehabilitation, executive director of an independent living center, independent living specialist and vocational rehabilitation counselor. I know that when people with disabilities are the architects of their own destiny they can achieve greatness in all aspects of their life.”

Duane is a nationally recognized leader in vocational rehabilitation and in the disability-rights movement. His positive, seasoned leadership style is a critical component of our success. Under Duane’s leadership, we are demonstrating a powerful commitment

to Washingtonians with disabilities and to the values underlying the Rehabilitation Act.

Carol Maher – Vice Chair (Western Washington):

“My interest in the Rehabilitation Council developed from my desire to see people with disabilities become active movers in developing the global economy. As a member I have the opportunity to provide input to DVR’s strategic plan. People with disabilities offer unique problem solving skills that can benefit the economy. The community of people with disabilities has been underemployed, undereducated and underutilized. Justin Dart urged all people to be leaders, “I cry out to you from the depths of my being. Humanity needs you! Lead! Lead! Lead the revolution of empowerment!” “You have the power; live the dream.”

Bob Roberts – Vice Chair (Eastern Washington):

“I believe that vocational rehabilitation is the dream and desire of the vast majority of people with disabilities. I worked to employ more than 1500 people a year, specifically, an amputee who wanted to work in construction as a Craft Laborer. With his positive attitude and cooperation of the apprenticeship program and contractors, using assistive technology he completed his test and is now fully employed at a good wage and is paying taxes.”

Bob is a council Vice Chair. His experience in the trades and in developing apprenticeship models is useful to our council. Bob advocates for students with disabilities transitioning from high school in to adulthood.

Martin McCallum:

“It’s a privilege to serve on the Council. We are working to partner with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to strengthen the quality of services available to its customers and increase the number of people with disabilities employed in jobs they like. I try to be a resource by drawing on my 30 years of experience managing employment and training programs.”

Under Martin’s leadership, Interagency Liaison committee members prioritized building relationships with Native American VR partners, the Department of Services for the Blind, the State Independent Living Council, and DVR customers with mental illness in 2005.

Bill Murray:

“I have been involved with VR services in some capacity throughout my 25 years of professional service in the field of mental health and developmental disabilities services. It is an honor to meet with, listen to, and learn from customers of our VR services. I hope to represent your needs in reviewing, analyzing, and advising our Washington State program.”

Bill’s steady leadership, reliability, and attention to group dynamics and process have been a tremendous resource to our council. Under his leadership the Council Effectiveness Committee has developed useful tools and opportunities for council members to learn.

Joanne Butts:

“My commitment to transition began with meeting the needs of my son and in working with other families at PAVE. Serving on the Council is a wonderful opportunity to hear from those who use or are waiting for VR services and to help influence policy decisions. Customer satisfaction is a high priority and we learn so much from the public forums.”

Tony Tran:

“I am a lead Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at DVR’s Rainier Office in Seattle. I graduated from the University of Washington. Most of my accomplishments are a direct result of someone opening the door to opportunity for me. That same spirit motivates me to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council, because I want to expand possibilities and open the door of opportunity for individuals with disabilities.”

Linda Pratt:

The Yakama Nation Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (YNVR) Director is honored to participate on the SRC for the State of Washington. Linda Pratt is a member of the Yakama Tribe, holds a Master’s degree from Washington State University and has been the Director of the YNVR for the past four years. Linda has a unique ability to work with non Native agencies to bridge the gap and improve a cultural awareness of tribal members living on reservations. With Linda’s leadership the Yakama Nation has worked in partnership through joint case file sharing, joint participation at the Annual State DVR and Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation Conferences demonstrating the importance of blending VR services to maximize resources to Tribal VR consumers.

Jeffry Abe-Gunter:

“I am a Case/Resource Manager for DSHS’ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) in Spokane and serve as the Chief Shop Steward for DDD Region 1 Union members. I have an overdrive gear that won’t let me shift out of it until I know that DVR will be able to serve a wider disability spectrum. I have a deep compassion in me to see that people with mental illness are better served by state agencies.”

John Harrison:

“I am a retired school counselor. I spent 30+ years in the education field, first as a teacher and then as an elementary counselor. My wife is a principal with the Olympia school district. We have two grown daughters. As one who experienced a disability my entire life, I am blessed with an understanding of those who are disabled. I am dedicated to seeing that persons with disabilities lead active and productive lives.”

Beth Berg:

“I represent the business sector on the Council. I have a mental health disability that enables me to offer perspective from both a business and personal view. I am motivated to serve on the council by seeing my fellow members work diligently and resourcefully. Learning from the customers has reminded me of how much potential each of us has and that sometimes we need to be heard and need a little help to get back on track.”

Sandra Carr:

“I have worked with individuals with disabilities for over 20 years, most of those with people who are Deaf and hard of

hearing. I am a member of the State Independent Living Council and was chosen as a representative on the State Vocational Rehabilitation Council. I'm proud to be serving on both of these councils. I'm hoping my participation and input will help to aid individuals in discovering their potential and become contributing members of society."

Andrew Holguin:

"I am a Tarahumara Mexican Indian. I work with "Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos" Orphanage, currently the home of over 2,800 children from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru. I am affiliated with the Adams County Juvenile Court, Othello Foursquare Church, United Farmworkers, Department of Health Naturopathic Advisory Committee, DSHS Diversity Child Protection Team, LUPE, the social services organization of United Farm Workers World Relief helping with the Sudanese Refugees arriving in Spokane. I have a tutoring program at the School of Education at Gonzaga University and am starting to work with the School of Medicine, University of Washington."

Mary-Louise (Lou) Colwell, Ed.D. :

Dr. Colwell is currently employed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in the Special Education Section. She has been employed at OSPI since 1995. Her primary responsibilities include developing and implementing interagency agreements with other state agencies that have service responsibilities for children and youth with disabilities, and providing technical assistance and training to school districts, parents and community members on special education topics.

Her experiences include teaching and administrative positions in general and special education in both the public and private sector. She earned her Doctorate in Educational Leadership at Seattle University.

Spokane Consumer:

“DVR helped me find temporary positions. I can only work part-time and DVR has been one of the only helpful systems enabling me to keep a roof over my head. I sustained a back injury due to an accident. I applied for SSI and was turned down 10 times. I don’t know what to do now. Although I’m receiving DSHS benefits, I need a source of income. Employment is tight nowadays. DVR helped me get a job through NOVA. How can I get better employment and still get benefits? My VR case was closed.”

WSRC STAFF

Joelle Brouner – Executive Director:

“I began working for the council in February of this year because I believe strongly that when Government is doing its work well it can be accountable to the people it serves and inspire engagement from the public. I’ve been moved by the considerable investment of time and energy that each council member has made to our work. I have the utmost respect for customers of DVR who took the time to share their stories about their journey to employment with us.”

I see this position as an extension of my long term commitment to the Disability Rights Movement and the state where I was born and raised. From early efforts to advocate for my own dreams as a person with a disability, to systems

advocacy, and broader efforts to make society more welcoming to people with disabilities, I have a deep commitment to contributing to positive change.

In 2005, this council has made great strides toward achieving its full potential. It has been an honor to serve this council, DVR, and its customers.”

Kathy Krulich – Executive Assistant:

“It has been a privilege for me to serve the citizens with disabilities of Washington State by supporting the work of the Council. My administrative support/customer service of Council members helps us all focus our attention on the important discussions and service delivery solutions for people with disabilities.”

Kennewick Consumer:

“I’m not trying to trash the DVR office. I just want to see this bathroom issue get resolved. That’s an easy problem to solve.”

“Our commitment to increasing access to DVR offices is the most basic part of our commitment to increased access to VR services. Accordingly, we have encouraged DVR to address access issues raised about the restroom facilities in the Kennewick DVR office and received assurance that these will be addressed promptly.”

MEETINGS 2005

January 19/20 – Olympia
April 21/22 – Spokane
July 21/22 – Seattle
October 20/21 – Kennewick

MEETINGS 2006

January 19/20 – Olympia
April 20/21 – Wenatchee area
July 20/21 – Vancouver
October 19/20 – Yakima

COMMITTEES

The council's leadership team consists of a chair and two vice chairs. Five committees address specific pieces of our mission.

Executive Committee -

Oversees budget and operations. Committee members resolve personnel matters, and spearhead strategic planning. Chair – Duane M. French

Council Effectiveness Committee -

Strengthens our infrastructure by recruiting, orienting, and supporting the development of members. Chair – Bill Murray

The remaining committees nurture relationships we depend on:

Customer Satisfaction and Program Evaluation Committee –

Solicits input from DVR customers and examines the impact of policies and procedures on the customers. Chair – Joann Butts/John Harrison

Planning and Policy Committee –

Works with DVR to develop effective policies and procedures. The committee collects recommendations and coordinates production of council reports. Chair – Bob Roberts

Interagency Liaison Committee –

Collects and disseminates information from partners and promotes collaboration. Chair – Martin McCallum

RESOURCE PLAN:

The SRC worked with the DVR Director to develop an annual budget for FFY 2006. The budget agreed upon will allow the Council to complete the work required by the Rehabilitation Act.

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Kennewick Consumer:

“I’ve been with DVR 15 years+. Worked with them providing services for their people and then became disabled myself. I have MS and I signed up in January of 2005 and statewide I called a week ago and 9000 people are ahead of me statewide. I remember when there were no waiting lists.”

FFY 2006 COUNCIL BUDGET

Personnel	\$ 97,290
Communications	\$ 5,500
Rent/Utilities	\$ 5,800
Printing	\$ 8,000
Education & Training	\$ 12,500
Equipment	\$ 6,000
Purchased Services	\$ 25,000

Contract Services	\$ 6,000
Quarterly Meetings	\$ 29,060
Committee Budgets	\$ 12,500
Surveys	\$ 25,000
Total Budget	\$232,650

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Celebration:**

July 26th 2005 marked the 15th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The WSRC organized “ADA – Past, Present and Future” to draw the community together, to celebrate civil rights gains made by people with disabilities, and to mobilize the spirit of advocacy that has made those gains possible.

The event was sponsored by:

WSRC, Morningside, Washington Protection and Advocacy System, State Independent Living Council, Governor’s Committee on Disability & Employment, Department of Services for the Blind, Human Rights Commission, Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Mental Health Planning & Advisory Council, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Home Care Quality Authority, SEIU Local 775, Young Democrats of Washington Disability Caucus

Seventy-five people gathered to reflect on the importance of the ADA and the strength of the community that successfully made it happen.

Speakers for the event included:

- Governor Mike Lowry
- Representative Eric Pettigrew (D) 37th District
- Representative Jan Shabro (R) 31st District
- Randy Revelle
- Mark Adreon
- Jan Holler
- Julian Saucedo Wheeler
- Sharon Jodock-King
- Alan King

The Washington Public Affairs Network “TVW” aired the celebration three times and *The Olympian* wrote a feature article. To order a copy of the footage from TVW, visit: www.tvw.org.

- **Youth Leading the Way on Informed Choice:**

The Spokane School District’s IMAGES program offers young people with disabilities facing graduation, adulthood and the workforce the opportunity to identify career goals and present their skills to employers. At our April meeting in Spokane we met some of the students who are charting their way to a bright future.

These students exemplify the spirit of the Rehabilitation Act. They’ve investigated career options, explored what employers expect, and have developed portfolios highlighting the skills they’ve developed in high school. We are moved by their leadership. The WSRC has encouraged Governor Gregoire to recognize this program as an excellent model and we have nominated them for a Civic Stars award being given by the Sedexo Marriott Corporation.

- **Increased Communication with Customers:**

The WSRC has strongly encouraged DVR to increase communication with its customers and those who are waiting for service. We understand that waiting for service can be frustrating and that receiving no information during the wait can make it worse.

In May the Council submitted formal comments to DVR on its effort to revise letters explaining OOS to its customers and specifying their priority category. Our suggestions included:

- Using very plain language
- Specifying an estimated wait time
- Including information about alternative resources

- **Increased Choice:**

As is the case in many disability-related service systems, there is a growing emphasis on providing customers with increased power, influence and choice about the services they receive.

The WSRC has supported efforts by DVR to examine the meaning of economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities by serving on the Procurement Committee. The Procurement Committee addresses a small piece of the larger issue of economic self-sufficiency by increasing customer choice about modes of payment for services. Our work with this committee helps us appreciate how many systemic issues need to be addressed for meaningful change to be implemented.

- **National Governor's Association (NGA) Policy Institute:**

Washington is one of six states to participate in the National Governors Association's (NGA) 2005 Policy Academy on Improving Outcomes for Young Adults with Disabilities. Through the Academy, Washington hopes to make significant progress on important challenges that cross agency/program lines by assembling a network of informed leaders.

Washington's ten-member cross-agency team attended NGA's October 5-7, 2005, Policy Academy with the aim of fostering cross-agency policy alignment regarding transition.

Washington's eleven-member leadership team created a six-month work plan to develop systemic strategies for assisting youth with disabilities transitioning to adulthood, post-secondary education and employment. Two of 11 team members also serve on the SRC

- Linda Pratt, representing Native American VR Programs,
- Martin McCallum, representing the Workforce Board.

- **Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Partnership:**

Washington is one of 37 states that received the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Service. The aim of MIG is to support increased collaboration between the various systems providing services to people receiving Medicaid Benefits.

The WSRC was invited in August to become a MIG grant partner. We are honored to support the work of our innovative colleagues.

The SRC received \$10,000 to gather input from consumers about how DVR might work more effectively with customers with mental illness (some of whom receive services from the Mental Health Division, others who are underserved or unserved.)

- **Mental Health Focus Groups:**

In October we held two focus groups (in Tacoma and Spokane) facilitated by and comprised of people with mental illness. Participants were recruited independently of DVR. Both facilitators and participants were compensated for their time and expertise.

Our goal was to gather information about how DVR might better serve people with mental illness, collaborate with partners in other service systems, and make informed choice more readily available to customers. The Council will use what we learned to inform our annual recommendations to DVR.

Our profound thanks to each participant, the Evergreen Clubhouse, Rosemary Gallagher, Sue Grant, Jayne Kaszynski, Steve Kozak, Betty Schwieterman, Laurie Teeter, Caroline Wise, and TACID (the Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities) who contributed to bringing the groups to fruition.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION

The Washington State Rehabilitation Council has reviewed the findings of the consumer satisfaction surveys sent by DVR to individuals whose VR cases have been closed as successfully rehabilitated.

A review of the survey results finds the following answers to the questions posed by DVR:

(Survey Questions will begin on the next page)

“I am satisfied with my job duties.”

42%	Strongly Agree
38%	Agree
10%	No Opinion
8%	Disagree
3%	Strongly Disagree

“My pay is enough for my basic needs.”

27 %	Strongly Agree
39%	Agree
11%	No Opinion
14%	Disagree
8%	Strongly Disagree

“I am satisfied with my benefits.”

(medical, dental, etc.)

22 %	Strongly Agree
25 %	Agree
15 %	No Opinion
10 %	Strongly Disagree
18 %	Does Not Apply

“I am generally satisfied with my job.”

36 %	Strongly Agree
42 %	Agree
10 %	No Opinion
6 %	Disagree
6 %	Strongly Disagree

“My job uses the skills and abilities that are most important to me.”

- 36% Strongly Agree
- 38% Agree
- 10% No Opinion
- 9% Disagree
- 7% Strongly Disagree

“During my involvement with DVR, I received enough information from my counselor or rehab tech to be able to decide what I needed to go to work.”

- 44% Strongly Agree
- 41% Agree
- 7% No Opinion
- 7% Disagree
- 2% Strongly Disagree

“I chose the job goal on my plan.”

- 43% Strongly Agree
- 38% Agree
- 10% No Opinion
- 6% Disagree
- 3% Strongly Disagree

“My counselor or rehab tech explained what DVR services were available so I could choose what was necessary to reach my goal.”

- 48% Strongly Agree
- 38% Agree
- 7% No Opinion
- 5% Disagree
- 2% Strongly Disagree

“If DVR could not provide this service I needed, I was given information about other programs that could help me.”

- 31% Strongly Agree
- 35% Agree
- 16% No Opinion
- 8% Disagree
- 3% Strongly Disagree
- 7% Does Not Apply

“When I receive services from someone other than DVR staff, I chose this service provider to use. A service provider is like a vendor or job coach who works outside DVR.”

- 37% Strongly Agree
- 39% Agree
- 13% No Opinion
- 9% Disagree
- 2% Strongly Disagree

“My counselor or rehab tech was responsive to me by: Returning my phone calls.”

- 53% Strongly Agree
- 32% Agree
- 9 % No Opinion
- 5% Disagree
- 1% Strongly Disagree

“My counselor or rehab tech was responsive to me by: Listening to me.”

- 57% Strongly Agree
- 36% Agree
- 3% No Opinion
- 3% Disagree
- 2% Strongly Disagree

“My counselor or rehab tech was responsive to me by:
Understanding the problems that I face about services.”

49%	Strongly Agree
35%	Agree
7%	No Opinion
7%	Disagree
2%	Strongly Disagree

“My counselor or rehab tech was responsive to me by:
Answering my questions.”

54%	Strongly Agree
39%	Agree
4%	No Opinion
2%	Disagree
1%	Strongly Disagree

“When I worked with DVR staff other than my counselor, the staff
were helpful.”

39%	Strongly Agree
41%	Agree
14%	No Opinion
4%	Disagree
1%	Strongly Disagree

“My counselor or rehab tech was responsive to me by: Dealing
with my complaints or concerns about services.”

44%	Strongly Agree
29%	Agree
18%	No Opinion
5%	Disagree
4%	Strongly Disagree

“I received services in my plan quickly enough.”

39% Strongly Agree

40% Agree

7% No Opinion

11% Disagree

3% Strongly Disagree

Kennewick Consumer Comment:

“I’ve been with DVR since April 2002. I been looking to go into business for myself been wanting to start up an art gallery to sell my art and put my art on display. I offered my services of making copies of my art to sell to the general public but my counselor has not helped me get started in that and I don’t think that DVR has the necessary tools to help me get started.”

Kennewick Consumer Comment:

“It’s unfortunate and it’s not probably anything to do with DVR but in general, if you do have a disability, people have a way of discriminating against you. It’s too bad but that’s what we’re up against. Probably everybody in here has faced greater difficulties while they have a disability than when they did not have one. How this can be dealt with – I don’t know. The only way I could see DVR improving for people like myself is to handle the people that do have quite a bit of education that still seem to be having problems.

Customers are the heart of the public vocational rehabilitation program. Seeking information from customers about their experiences in the vocational rehabilitation process, and using that information to implement changes in the program, is a critical measure of whether the spirit of the Rehabilitation Act is being honored.

The WSRC is collaborating with Washington State University's Social and Economic Research Center to develop and conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey that will yield statistically significant results and provide DVR with insight into the perceptions of customers, and areas where change is needed. We anticipate the results by the end of March 2006.

The WSRC will include the results of the survey in the recommendations we make to DVR in a report due to the Rehabilitation Services Administration in May. The difference between the **consumer satisfaction survey** to be completed by the WSRC and the survey done by DVR is that the council's survey will be sent to a representative sampling of people receiving services as well as those whose cases are closed.

Kennewick Consumer Comment:

“I went to worksource 2-3 years ago and got a job at Goodwill. While working at Goodwill I worked on computers. I like working on computers. There was a woman there who was really nice to me and helped me learn. I got to answer phones and help with support groups. Then I was told my contract was up after nine months. Just when I started to enjoy my job and thought I was getting somewhere, my job ended.”

ADA – Past, Present, Future July 26, 2005

Celebrating the 15th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

(The next three pages of the annual report contain photos of participants celebrating at the 15th Anniversary party.)

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2005 Annual Report**

**This report is available
In alternative formats upon request.**

Please call

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Or

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